Digital Fodder

eBay Affiliate Program Review

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eBay is an ecommerce company that connects buyers and sellers globally. It offers an online auction model where users can purchase products by bidding and buying at set prices. Featured product categories include fashion, home accessories, electronics, motors, collectibles, stationery, and more. eBay operates in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australasia. Its ecommerce ecosystem includes various specialty websites.

Company Profile

- Founded by Pierre Omidyar in 1995
- CEO: Jamie Iannone
- Headquarters: San Jose, California, USA
- Stock ticker: EBAY
- 1.5 billion live listings
- 175 million active buyers in 190 markets
- 1,500 cities with eBay classified listings
- A top ten global retail brand
- In the United States, a TV, video, or home audio item is sold every three seconds

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eBay Affiliate Program Review

The eBay affiliate program, also known as the eBay Partner Network (EPN), is a way to earn money by referring customers to eBay. Bloggers, YouTubers, marketers, and influencers use affiliate links to advertise products listed on eBay. When customers click on those links and purchase products, affiliates can earn commissions (or referral fees).

Suppose you want to promote toasters on your food blog. You would select a few toasters that you wish to recommend, generate affiliate links for them, and

place those links on your blog. If you have a YouTube channel, the links can go in your description.

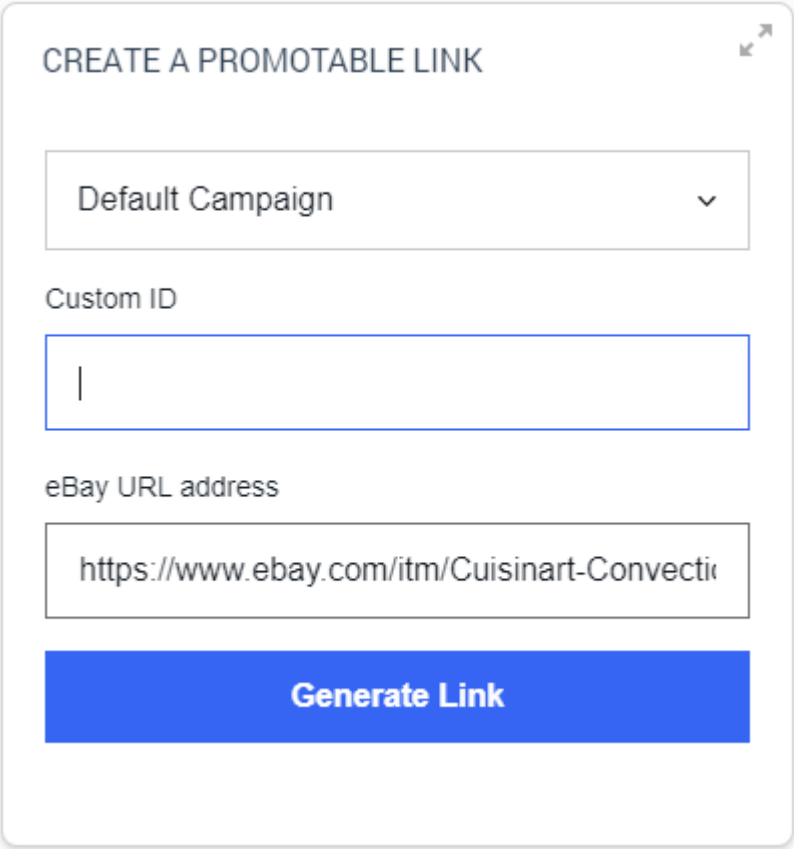
EPN is one of the first programs many new bloggers and affiliate marketers come across. eBay self-hosted its program for years. However, as of 2019, Impact hosts the program.

How to Create Affiliate Links

Creating a standard affiliate link takes seconds.

1. Log in to your eBay Partner Network account.

2. On the Home tab, scroll down to the link generation panel (CREATE A PROMOTABLE LINK). You can expand the panel if you want.



3. Select a campaign. I typically choose the “Default Campaign.” However, campaign IDs allow you to organize campaigns by category, site pages or placements, keyword groupings, or various websites. For example, you might create two campaigns to track your results from Twitter and your website.

4. The Custom ID field is optional and provides a more granular view at the transactional level. This field can hold up to 256 alphanumeric characters. You can use Custom IDs to track your traffic within a campaign or across multiple campaigns. For example, you might have a Campaign ID to identify the traffic from a website but use a Custom ID to track traffic that comes explicitly from the homepage.
5. Copy and paste the eBay URL address.
6. Click Generate Link.
7. Select the link type and action.
8. Click on Copy Link.

Policies & Disclosures

The eBay Partner Network, like most affiliate programs, has rules to follow. Adherence to their guidelines will allow you to remain in the program.

Disclosures and transparency are the cornerstones of affiliate marketing. To meet eBay's requirements, you must include a declaration with your links and identify yourself as an EPN affiliate. As per their network agreement, they recommend stating, "When you click on links to various merchants on this site and make a purchase, this can result in this site earning a commission. Affiliate pro-

grams and affiliations include, but are not limited to, the eBay Partner Network."

To comply with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulations, your disclosures must be:

- A clear disclosure could be as simple as "(paid link)", "#ad", #advertisement", "#sponsored", or "#CommissionsEarned".
- It should be placed near any affiliate link or product review in a location that customers will notice quickly. They shouldn't have to hunt for it.

For websites, it's standard to add a disclosure to the top of the page (review mine for an example). On YouTube, the common practice is to add a statement at the bottom of the description. What's important is that you conduct your affiliate marketing activities in good faith.

Naturally, promotional strategies like cookie stuffing, typo-squatting, and domain-parking are against EPN policies. Lastly, your marketing activities shouldn't be tied to digital properties and sites that fall into specific categories, for example, violence, firearms, gambling, content aimed at children, sexually explicit materials, illegal goods, and so on.

Pros of the Program

The affiliate program landing page is excellent. An affiliate landing page is supposed to be informative, and eBay hits the mark. The main menu covers solutions, resources, and the program. The help center is comprehensive and provides everything that affiliates would want to know.

There's an exclusive affiliate program for high-volume publishers. The invite-only program is for partners who drive substantial traffic and business to eBay. The benefits include exclusive content, early access to new tools, fast issue resolution, and customized incentives and promotions.

eBay's payout threshold is low. EPN pays commissions once a month for accounts that have earned over ten units of their home currency, such as ten dollars in the United States.

Affiliates can create custom banners. You can choose the ad layout, theme, and content for your banner then preview it before adding it to your site. Standard banners are also available.

Deep linking is available. Deep linking is how an affiliate creates a link to a specific page on the merchant's site. For example, instead of using a generic homepage affiliate link, I can link to an article related to my post. Publishers can deep-link to search results, trends, events, daily deals, and more. RSS feeds, APIs, and product feeds are available too.

eBay provides a robust set of affiliate marketing tools.

- Smart Share is a Chrome browser extension. Use it to create affiliate links to eBay listings as you browse so that you can directly share them on Facebook or Pinterest, or elsewhere online.
- The Bookmarklet Tool is perfect for on-the-fly linking. It provides a quick way to create affiliate links to any page on eBay from any browser.

- Smart Links ensure all your past, present, and future eBay links automatically include your affiliate tracking information. It works by adding a line of code to your website.
- Smart Placements deliver customizable, dynamic banners that identify visitors as they enter your site to match browsing history or settings. It uses remarketing strategies based on shopper interest and content.

Reporting and analytics are straightforward and foolproof. EPN's reporting dashboard provides all the details affiliates would want, such as marketplace source, traffic type, impressions, clicks, earnings, and conversion rates.

There's a full-time affiliate marketing team. When a merchant has the staff to support publishers, it quickens processes and shows commitment. You can reach eBay's affiliate team on their contact page.

eBay is a top online destination and trusted ecommerce company that has something for everyone. There are millions of listings across many product categories. Also, there are localized websites for the United States, Germany, France, Canada, and Australia. Sixty percent of eBay's revenue comes from international sites.

Super Affiliate Marketing Course: Learn How I Built a Five-Figure Website

Cons of the Program

eBay pays a low commission rate of 1 to 5 percent. For all that eBay is, its program falls short of rewarding affiliates generously. Although you might convert a high-ticket/expensive item and receive an excellent payout, low commission rates will work against your best efforts. Secondly, there's a cap on commissions. In most cases, the most you can earn for a transaction is $550. Commission limits are contrary to the spirit of affiliate marketing and making unlimited income.

Product Category	Commission Rates	Cap
Business & Industrial	2.5%	$225
Collectibles	2% – $4%	$550
Electronics	2%	$550
Fashion	3% – $5%	$550
Home & Garden	4%	$550
Lifestyle	1% – $3.5%	$550
Media	3% – $4%	$550
Parts & Accessories	3% – $5%	$550
Real Estate	1%	$100
All Other Categories	1%	$550

The cookie duration is insufficient. Affiliates are credited with qualifying transactions that occur within 24 hours–a 24-hour cookie–through standard links. A 24-hour cookie is a disadvantage because publishers must rely on customers to make purchases within that period to get credit. eBay states,

A Qualifying Transaction occurs when (1) an end-user makes a purchase on a participating Affiliate website within 24 hours after clicking your Promotional Content for a "Buy It Now" item, (2) end-user places a bid on an auction within 24 hours after clicking your Promotional Content and wins such auction within ten days for an "Auction" item, or (3) an end-user makes a purchase through eBay's API on a digital property that is owned and operated by you, and that complies with all other terms and conditions of your agreement for participation in eBay's Buy API Program. For any Qualifying Transactions, you receive a percentage of the GMB for that purchase, based on the category-level commission rates shown below. Note that there are certain items and categories for which eBay Inc. earns low or no revenue; in such cases, you will earn low or no revenue share. These items and categories may include but are not limited to gift cards, items sold by charities, and special promotional deals. You will only be paid once for each Qualifying Transaction; no duplicate payments will be made under eBay's Buy API Program.

Affiliates can't access every marketplace, only those in North America (the United States and Canada), Australia, and several European countries. eBay

is available in many Latin American and Asian countries, but those markets are inaccessible through EPN. It would be beneficial to have access to all of eBay's digital properties through one portal.

How Much Can You Make?

Can you make four figures a month as an EPN affiliate? While eBay is a top ecommerce company, it's unlikely that you will make that amount or a significant income. Low commission rates and a 24-hour cookie will constrain your earnings and conversions. You would need substantial traffic to compensate for the program's shortcomings.

Where should eBay rank in your marketing activities? It should be a low priority. Although you can earn money, you must be practical and maintain low expectations. I've made a few dollars, but don't expect monthly payouts.

Is Joining EPN Worth It?

eBay's affiliate program doesn't excite me, and I don't go out of my way to recommend it. Many other merchants provide cookie durations of 30 to 60 days, which is more advantageous. Also, more appealing commission rates are available from numerous retail and ecommerce companies.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is eBay's affiliate commission rate?

eBay pays affiliates up to 5 percent. It can be more for high-performing affiliates.

What is the cookie length?

The cookie is 24 hours.